

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for controlling conference room devices connected to
2 a first computer, the method comprising:
3 receiving status information from the conference room devices
4 connected to the first computer;
5 displaying a device menu of available devices for a particular
6 conference room;
7 displaying a control menu to control at least one of the available
8 devices; and
9 transmitting commands to a selected one of the available devices to
10 control the selected device in response to user input.

1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the devices include at least one of
2 an ambient lighting control, ambient temperature control, a speaker phone, audio
3 equipment, video equipment, window coverings, and a physical access control.

1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein the device menu and the control
2 menu are displayed simultaneously.

1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the device menu and the control
2 menu are displayed on a common screen.

1 5. The method of claim 1 further comprising displaying a type menu
2 for selection of a type of conference.

1 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the step of displaying a device
2 menu comprises displaying a device menu of available devices corresponding to the
3 type of conference selected.

1 7. The method of claim 5 wherein the step of displaying a type menu
2 comprises displaying buttons corresponding to at least a local meeting, an audio
3 conference, and a video conference.

1 8. The method of claim 1 wherein the displaying steps comprise
2 sending formatted menus to a second computer via a computer network wherein the
3 second computer is remotely located from the first computer to allow a remote user
4 to control the conference room devices.

1 9. The method of claim 1 wherein the displaying steps comprise
2 sending web browser compatible menus to a second computer accessible via the
3 internet.

1 10. The method of claim 1 further comprising displaying status
2 information for at least one of the conference room devices connected to the first
3 computer.

1 11. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
2 automatically determining whether a compatible device has been added
3 to or removed from the conference computer; and
4 automatically updating a status of the compatible device on at least
5 one of the menus.

1 12. The method of claim 1 further comprising automatically sending
2 a message to technical support in response to a corresponding device status.

1 13. The method of claim 12 wherein the step of sending comprises
2 sending an email message.

1 14. The method of claim 12 wherein the step of sending comprises
2 transmitting a numeric or alphanumeric message to a wireless device indicating a
3 need for technical support.

1 15. The method of claim 1 further comprising sending a video image
2 of the conference room to technical support personnel.

1 24. The method of claim 1 further comprising selectively transmitting
2 a video image of the conference room to a remotely located technician to facilitate
3 troubleshooting of at least one conference room device.

1 39. The computer readable storage medium of claim 38 wherein the
2 two-way protocol comprises at least one of RS-232 and telnet.

1 40. The computer readable storage medium of claim 30 wherein the
2 instructions for displaying comprise instructions for displaying menus via a touch
3 panel directly connected to the computer.

1 41. The computer readable storage medium of claim 30 further
2 comprising instructions for transmitting a video image of the conference room to a
3 remote location.

1 42. The computer readable storage medium of claim 30 further
2 comprising instructions for displaying a type menu for selection of a type of
3 conference.

1 43. The computer readable storage medium of claim 42 wherein the
2 instructions for displaying a device menu display a device menu of available devices
3 corresponding to a selected type of conference.

1 44. The computer readable storage medium of claim 42 wherein the
2 instructions for displaying a type menu comprise instructions for displaying buttons
3 corresponding to at least a local meeting, an audio conference, and a video
4 conference.

1 45. The computer readable storage medium of claim 30 further
2 comprising:
3 instructions for locally previewing output from a selected one of the
4 devices; and
5 instructions for sending the output from the selected one of the devices
6 to a remote location in response to a send command.

1 46. The computer readable storage medium of claim 30 further
2 comprising instructions for displaying a summary screen having status information
3 for all conference room devices associated with a particular conference room.

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1 47. A system for controlling conference room devices, the system
2 comprising:

3 a computer connected to a computer network accessible by at least one
4 remotely located computer;

5 a device connected to the computer for displaying menus and
6 receiving input from users in the conference room;

7 a camera directly connected to the computer, the camera receiving
8 commands from the computer including at least zoom, tilt, and pan commands, and
9 sending status information to the computer including at least on and off;

10 a telephone in communication with the computer for dialing telephone
11 numbers and providing audio communication between the conference room and a
12 remote location;

13 wherein the computer generates commands to display menus and
14 receive commands via the touch panel including a device menu showing available
15 devices and corresponding control menus.

1 48. A system for remotely accessing conference room devices, the
2 system comprising:

3 a computer having a first interface for connecting the conference room
4 devices and a second interface for remotely accessing the computer, wherein the
5 computer transmits information via the second interface indicative of available
6 conference room devices connected to the first interface for a selected conference
7 room.

1 49. The system of claim 48 wherein the computer receives status
2 information from at least one conference room device via the first interface and
3 transmits status information for the at least one conference room device via the
4 second interface.

1 50. The system of claim 48 wherein the computer transmits
2 commands via the first interface to control at least one conference room device.

1 51. The system of claim 48 wherein the computer receives a
2 command from a second computer via the second interface and transmits a
3 corresponding command via the first interface to control at least one conference
4 room device.

1 52. The system of claim 48 wherein the conference room devices
2 include a videoconferencing camera, a videoconferencing monitor, and a conference
3 room camera connected to the computer via the first interface, wherein the computer
4 selectively transmits images from the conference room camera, which is remotely
5 controllable via the second interface, to facilitate remote troubleshooting of the
6 videoconferencing camera and/or monitor by a technician.

1 53. The system of claim 52 wherein the computer selectively
2 transmits images from the videoconferencing camera via the second interface to a
3 remotely located technician to facilitate troubleshooting of the videoconferencing
4 camera and/or monitor.

1 54. A method for controlling conference room devices associated
2 with a conference room, the conference room devices connected to a first computer,
3 the method comprising:
4 receiving a scheduling request for the conference room including a
5 date and time; and
6 automatically generating a request to control at least one of the
7 conference room devices via the first computer based on the scheduled date and time.

1 55. The method of claim 54 wherein the conference room devices
2 include a physical access control device and wherein the step of automatically
3 generating a request comprises automatically generating a request to control the
4 physical access control device to allow access to the conference room based on the
5 scheduled date and time.

1 56. The method of claim 54 wherein the scheduling request includes
2 a request for use of video and/or audio conferencing devices, the method further
3 comprising:

4 automatically requesting connections from a bridge provider based on
5 the date and time.

1 57. The method of claim 54 wherein the scheduling request identifies
2 at least one conference room device, the method further comprising:

3 · automatically determining status of the at least one conference room
4 device; and

5 automatically contacting technical support if the status of the at least
6 one conference room device indicates a problem.